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First District

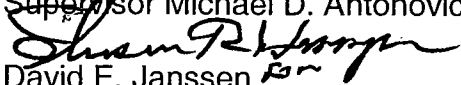
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May 6, 2005

To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
From: 
David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

MOTION TO SUPPORT AB 717 (GORDON AND HORTON) -- CENTINELA AIRPORT CLINIC (ITEM NO. 13, AGENDA OF MAY 10, 2005)

Item No. 13 on the May 10, 2005 Agenda is a motion by Supervisor Burke to support AB 717 (Gordon and Horton) related to the Centinela Airport Clinic, and seek amendments to AB 717 to ensure compliance with local policies and procedures, and increase reimbursement rates for physician and ambulance service providers.

Existing State law and regulations require paramedics and ambulances to transport patients needing medical care or screening to hospitals with emergency departments, and authorize local emergency medical services (EMS) agencies to approve other freestanding non-hospital sites, known as emergency receiving centers, for the receipt of emergency patients. Additionally, State law provides for a consolidated license of a general acute care hospital comprised of more than one physical plant if they are on the same premises.

AB 717, as amended on April 13, 2005, would allow the freestanding Centinela Airport Clinic, on a pilot basis, to be considered the equivalent of an emergency department of a general acute care hospital despite not being located on the premises of a general acute care hospital. AB 717 would, among other provisions, also require the Centinela Airport Clinic to 1) comply with the requirements of a general acute care hospital emergency department, 2) be open 24-hours per day, 365 days per year, 3) maintain laboratory services and provide necessary radiological services, 4) assure physician, surgeon, and nurse staffing applicable to hospital emergency departments, 5) be

Each Supervisor
May 6, 2005
Page 2

capable of transferring patients to higher levels of care, and 6) provide data to the EMS agency. According to the authors, the Centinela Airport Clinic is currently being reimbursed at the level of an urgent care center, and AB 717 would allow for a higher reimbursement at emergency department rates.

In October 2004, the County's EMS Agency approved the Centinela Airport Clinic to be an emergency receiving center on a pilot basis. It is the first freestanding emergency receiving center facility in California to be approved to receive 911 basic life support patients. In the event of a disaster, terrorist attack, or other major event at the Los Angeles International Airport, the Centinela Airport Clinic's strategic proximity to the airport makes it an important center for triage and basic life support levels of emergency care.

The County's Department of Health Services (DHS) indicates that AB 717 will help to improve the utilization of scarce emergency room resources through diversion of less seriously ill or injured patients to a more appropriate setting of care. DHS further indicates that AB 717 can be improved by amending to specify that the Centinela Airport Clinic must comply with the policies and procedures of the local EMS Agency to receive basic life support patients as part of the 911 EMS system, and to increase reimbursement rates for related physicians and ambulance service providers to match the level of care provided.

DHS recommends that the Board of Supervisors support AB 717 and seek to amend the measure as specified above, and we concur.

Support for AB 717 is consistent with the County's State Legislative Agenda which supports proposals that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency and trauma care services through the diversion of low acuity patients to more appropriate systems of care.

AB 717 is sponsored by the Centinela Freeman Health System, and is supported by the California Hospital Association, and the South Bay Fire Chiefs' Association. There is no opposition on record. The bill is pending consideration by the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

DEJ:GK
MAL:JF:ib

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Department of Health Services
Legislative Strategist